

Testimony in Support of  
Proposed Bill 5277:  
An Act Legalizing and Regulating Mixed Martial Arts  
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\*Members of the Public Safety and Security Committee, thank you for your time and consideration of this proposed bill. The legalization of MMA in the state of CT is something that we at Webster Bank Arena and the City of Bridgeport feel strongly about as do many others throughout the state including building operators, employees of the venues, local merchants and fans of the sport.

\*MMA is one of the fastest growing sports in the world, being practiced professionally in over 100 countries. The various entities that present the sport are well run, highly regulated, professional organizations who welcome oversight by various state organizations as a means of ensuring quality programming for its fans and most importantly, safety for its participants.

\*MMA is protective of its combatants. It has shown to be proactive in ensuring that it remains one of, if not the safest combat sport. Recent studies (including research performed at Johns Hopkins University) have shown that MMA has significantly less head injuries than boxing (which is legal in the state of CT).

\*MMA is legal in 48 states (NY and CT are the only holdouts) and is available on a daily basis through a variety of television contracts; cable and network relationships that have grown this sport dramatically. Furthermore, MMA events have been held at the CT casinos.

\*MMA is quality programming for buildings such as ours and fans ask on a regular basis as to when we will present the product.

\*The economic impact that MMA shows bring cannot be understated. The purpose of the state's investment in Webster Bank Arena is to serve as an economic driver to the downtown area. MMA is a case study in the positive economic impact that a venue such as Webster Bank Arena can be to Bridgeport. When we present quality programming such as our concert schedule or the upcoming NCAA Women's Regional, downtown Bridgeport is packed with visitors, many of whom walk away raving out the dining and entertainment options that Bridgeport has to offer.

\*The measurable financial impact of an MMA show is dramatic. (See attached) During challenging economic times, the state of CT would realize over \$150,000 per show based upon ticket tax revenues and supplemental ticket tax revenues. Wages in excess of \$300,000 per event and the accompanying payroll taxes are significant. Over 250 people (many of whom are union members) will be working on an MMA show date.



Furthermore, the state owned parking garages adjacent to the Webster Bank Arena will generate approximately \$12,000 net to the state for a single MMA event.

\*Every MMA event that is held in neighboring states is a drain on the CT economy. The per capita spending of the MMA fan is significant and by not bringing this sport to our state, we are allowing monies that are desperately needed in our state to go elsewhere.

\*Thank you very much for your time and interest. I am happy to answer any questions that you might have now or at your convenience. I've included my contact information on the handout sheet that you received.

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